

BOARD OF HEALTH

Report on Disinfectants for Use on Merchandise.

FORMALIN WONT KILL MICROBES

But Sulphur Straight Gave Them Their Quietus—Full Description of the Recent Experiments.

(From Thursday's Daily.)

Discussion of microbes and methods of murdering them filled the air at yesterday's meeting of the Board of Health. The occasion was the presentation of Dr. Alvarez' report regarding the fumigation experiments carried on at the Mail dock. The summary of the report was as follows: Formalin had failed to kill the germs; on the contrary they had thrived upon the diet, but it was proven that sulphur exterminated them.

After reading the report the Board discussed several vital matters in executive session. In fact the whole meeting was behind closed doors.

The report of Dr. Alvarez is as follows:

Mr. H. E. Cooper, President of the Board of Health.

Dear Sir: I have the honor to submit the report of the experiments made to determine the efficacy of formalin and also of sulphur as disinfectants of merchandise.

On the 15th instant, under the direction of Dr. F. R. Day, the port physician, and Mr. C. B. Reynolds, the executive officer of the Board of Health, I prepared six agar-agar Petri dishes and inoculated them as follows: Two with bacilli of bubonic plague, one with the bacilli of typhoid fever, one with the bacilli of diphtheria, one with the bacilli of pseudo-diphtheria, and one with the bacillus prodigiosus.

I prepared also twelve agar-agar test tubes and inoculated them with the pathogenic germs above mentioned and also with the bacillus of pneumonia.

The Petri dishes and the test tubes, containing the germs of the diseases mentioned, were placed all over the room used for fumigating freight at the Pacific Mail wharf. Wire netting was used to cover them as protection against rats and mice.

The doors were closed and the formalin lamp discharged its vapor through a small hole in the door for nine hours and a half.

On the following day the doors were opened and the Petri dishes and test tubes gathered. It could be seen at a glance that all the disease germs were growing and showed vigorous colonies. The bacillus prodigiosus grew with such rapidity that the greater part of the Petri dish was covered with bright-red colonies.

Two days later numerous moulds and ordinary germs found in the air have grown in the dishes and test tubes.

From the foregoing facts I draw the following conclusions:

Formalin, as used in this experiment, is worthless as a disinfectant. It is not capable of destroying the germs of any disease nor of arresting their development. It did not show any deleterious influence over the ordinary germs that float in the air.

Owing to the higher temperature of the disinfecting room at the Pacific Mail wharf, the germs, while exposed to the formaline vapor, grew faster and more luxuriant than they grow in the laboratory.

However, it would be erroneous to conclude that formalin is worthless as a disinfecting agent, because it proved to be of no value in this experiment. Its reputation as a reliable disinfectant is well established and our experience with it merely shows that the room at the Pacific Mail wharf is not adapted to its use.

Formalin to be efficient must be used in a room that is not too large for the size of the lamp, and, above all, the room must be air-tight.

On the following day—the 16th—the experiment was repeated, placing new cultures of all the germs used the previous day about the room at the Pacific Mail wharf, using the same precautions against rats and mice.

Sulphur was used instead of formalin for four and a half hours. On the 17th the doors were opened and the Petri dishes and test tubes examined.

All the germs of the different diseases were found dead and no colonies of moulds or other germs that float in the air have appeared on the agar-agar.

Several bright silver coins which Mr. Reynolds had wrapped in many folds of a cloth showed clearly the effects of the sulphur fumigation.

We may conclude that sulphur, as used in this experiment, is capable of destroying the germs of the different diseases, which were exposed to its fumes.

In closing this report I would suggest that the fumigating room be divided into two or more small compartments and, above all, that they be made air-tight.

Respectfully submitted,
I. F. ALVAREZ, M. D.,
Bacteriologist in the Board of Health,
Honolulu, July 19th, 1899.

These were present at the meeting: President Cooper, Secretary Wilson, Dr. Wood, Dr. Day, Dr. Robinson, G. W. Smith, Agent Reynolds, E. C. Winston and I. H. Kestle.

Shortest on Record.

In the two calls brought by Jesse Kane and James Kane against the Oahu Railway and Land Company for

the recovery of royal jewelry and clothing alleged to have been contained in two valises lost between Kahuku and Honolulu Attorney F. M. Hatch for the railroad company has filed what are probably the shortest answers on record in any case. They are identical and contain exactly eleven words each, viz: "Said defendant denies each and every allegation in plaintiff's complaint contained."

U. S. Senator Clark

Senator C. D. Clark of Wyoming is in Honolulu again. He arrived by the Mariposa yesterday morning and intends to complete his tour of the Islands. The genial Senator is as cheerful as ever and as sanguine over the future of Hawaii. He has not the slightest doubt but that a territorial form of government with broad privileges will be granted. While his visit here will be taken up principally with sight-seeing he will continue his investigations of local conditions. Almost the first man he looked for after his arrival was Colonel Sam Parker, his former host. When Senator Clark goes back he intends to have the Colonel go with him.

SAM WIDDIFIELD

Made First Lieutenant By General Otis.

Assigned to the Thirty-sixth Regiment—The Appointment Conferred By Colonel McKinley.

WASHINGTON, July 11.—The President today confirmed and commissioned the officers recommended by General Otis for the Thirty-sixth and Thirty-seventh Volunteer Regiments now being organized in the Philippines.

Among the list of those assigned to the former regiment appears the name of S. W. Widdifield, a Honolulu boy, who enlisted in San Francisco in the First California Regiment at the outbreak of the war with Spain.

It will be remembered that when the First California's were in this city on their way to Manila that Sam Widdifield, the Turton boys, Hammer and other island boys were made much of, and it is gratifying to add that nothing but good accounts have been received of them since.

Lieutenant Widdifield must have earned his promotion by strict attention to duty and soldierlike conduct in general, for the writer is well enough acquainted with Major General Otis to know that he would never recommend an incompetent man to a position of honor and responsibility, such is usually only attained after years of the dry routine of military service.

Lieutenant Widdifield's appointment is not only an honor to himself and the place of his birth, but is a graceful tribute paid by President McKinley and Major General Otis to the loyalty of the youth of Hawaii.

PAUL JONES' REMAINS.

WASHINGTON, July 12.—Inquiry was recently made at the State Department in regard to the grave of John Paul Jones, the great naval hero of Revolutionary days, who died in Paris on July 18, 1782. He was buried there with the highest honors by the French government, but it appears that the present location of his grave is not known. The Secretary of State recently addressed a letter to Henry Vignaud of the United States Embassy in Paris, asking whether the grave of John Paul Jones in Paris is known and marked. He has received a reply from Mr. Vignaud, saying that, although he has made earnest and frequent inquiries of the city authorities in regard to the matter, he has been unable to discover the whereabouts of the grave. One thing established by his inquiries, however, he says, is that John Paul Jones was not buried in the cemetery where the remains of Lafayette lie, as has been supposed by some people. In another letter it is intimated that, owing to a custom prevailing in Paris, the remains of John Paul Jones were deposited in a rented grave for a term of years, and that upon the expiration of the lease, a great many years ago, the bones of this distinguished American patriot were thrown into the "Potters' Field."

STEAMERS COLLIDE.

SAN FRANCISCO, July 12.—The steamers Westcott and Aloha collided last night off Port Ross, and the Westcott nearly went to the bottom. Both vessels are now bound in, the Westcott being in tow of the Aloha. A huge piece of canvas is spread over the bow of the Westcott, and men are seen to the station at Point Reyes over the bow of the steamer working to keep the water out of the hold.

At about 12 o'clock a telephone message was received in this city from Port Ross that two distinguished steamers were in collision off the beach and one of them looked like the Westcott. The message was immediately sent to the assistance of the one in distress. They both headed toward Point Reyes

FOR GUATEMALA

Possibility of American Protectorate Has Arisen.

WARSHIPS HURRYING TO SCENE

The United States Government May Be Called Upon to Take Charge There.

NEW ORLEANS, July 12.—The Picayune prints the following:

"News of the gravest import from Guatemala was brought to this city by passengers on the Snyder steamship Breakwater, which touched at four or five of the leading Central American ports before putting in here late Monday night.

"Just before sailing for New Orleans," said one of the passengers, "I was informed by several persons that England and Germany would shortly make a naval demonstration at the two leading ports of the Republic of Guatemala. I learned that a large amount of bonds issued by the Government of Guatemala and held by English and German interests have been practically repudiated and that the German and English holders have protested vigorously to their governments.

"Four warships are said to have been ordered to Guatemala waters, two German and two English. One of each flag will proceed to Puerto Barrios and one of each nation will be sent to San Jose de Guatemala, which is on the Pacific side of the republic.

"The point that most interests the United States is that if this seizure of the custom-houses should result in a long holding of those ports, in order that the amount could be collected, it would be necessary for a protectorate to be established over the republic of Guatemala while this was going on. In that case, the natural course of affairs would be to turn to either Mexico or the United States for that protectorate. The first proposition would hardly be probable because of the bad feeling existing between Guatemala and the republic of Mexico over the boundary dispute."

RETURNING VOLUNTEERS.

The transports Ohio and Newport were sighted off San Francisco harbor just as the Mariposa left. The Second Oregon Regiment and California Signal Service men were on board.

At once the screaming of sirens on the city front announced the tidings to the entire city, and the towns across the bay. A moment later the firing of cannon began, shot after shot, as it thundered out in salute, placing the meaning of the earlier signals beyond doubt. At almost the same moment, on numberless flagstuffs throughout the city, the national colors shot upward and the Stars and Stripes, everywhere flung to the breeze, gave yet further emphasis to the fact that the soldier boys were returning. Crowds of people hurried to the heights overlooking the northern bay, eager to catch the first glimpse possible of the ships bringing back the men who had dared and suffered so much in the Far East in their country's cause. The trip into and up the bay is a long one and the announcement was speedily made that it would be 6 o'clock before the transports would reach their anchorage.

ALGER HEARD FROM.

WASHINGTON, July 12.—Secretary Alger today made, in a report to the Associated Press, his personal statement concerning the rumors that he is about to resign from the Cabinet. When asked as to the truth of the rumors, the Secretary said: "There is nothing in these reports but air. I shall not retire this year, certainly, and cannot say as to the future. My private business and the state of my health will govern my future course.

"These constant assaults and repeated baseless reports are, of course, very annoying to me and extremely distressing to my family, but I have never retired under fire yet, and do not propose to do so now. Nothing that I have ever heard of or known of has been so cruel as the attacks upon me. If my critics can point to one thing in my official career that I have done that I ought not to have done, or that I have not done that I should have done, I shall be very glad to surrender my present official duties."

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